WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A communications system, comprising:

a server system that stores software applications;

a broadcast system that broadcasts the software applications; and

a multiplicity of portable clients that each include a receiver having a tuner that is selectively tunable to receive a selected one of the software applications broadcasted by the broadcast system.

2. The communications system as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the broadcast system is a wireless broadcast system.

3. The communications system as set forth in Claim 1, further comprising a two-way communications link between the server system and each of the multiplicity of portable clients, wherein the two-way communications link includes a forward channel over which the respective portable client can transmit client data to the server system, and a return channel over which the server system can transmit system data to the respective portable client.

4. The communications system as set forth in Claim 3, wherein each of the portable clients further includes a modem for establishing the two-way communications link.

5. The communications system as set forth in Claim 4, wherein the modem of each of the portable clients is a wireless modem.

6. The communications system as set forth in Claim 5, wherein the broadcast system is a satellite direct broadcast system.

7. The communications system as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the broadcast system broadcasts the software applications over different channels each occupying a different respective frequency

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band.

8. The communications system as set forth in Claim 7, wherein the broadcast system is a satellite broadcast system.

9. The communications system as set forth in Claim 7, wherein the tuner of the receiver of each of the multiplicity of portable clients is selectively tunable to any selected one of the plurality of different frequency bands in order to receive one or more selected one of the software applications broadcasted by the broadcast system.

10. The communications system as set forth in Claim 8, further comprising a two-way communications link between the server system and each of the multiplicity of portable clients, wherein the two-way communications link includes a forward channel over which the respective portable client can transmit client data to the server system, and a return channel over which the server system can transmit system data to the respective portable client.

11. The communications system as set forth in Claim 10, wherein the two-way communications link between the server system and each of the multiplicity of portable clients is a telephone connection.

12. The communications system as set forth in Claim 1, wherein each of the portable clients is a portable data communications device.

13. The communications system as set forth in Claim 1, wherein each of the portable clients further includes a user-interface that enables a user to select one of the broadcasted software applications for downloading, and a processor for executing the downloaded software application.

14. The communications system as set forth in Claim 13, wherein:

the broadcast system broadcasts the software applications over different channels each occupying a different respective frequency band; and,

the tuner of the receiver of each of the multiplicity of portable clients is selectively tunable to any selected one of the plurality of different frequency bands in order to receive one or

5   more selected one of the software applications broadcasted by the broadcast system.

15. The communications system as set forth in Claim 14, further comprising a two-way communications link between the server system and each of the multiplicity of portable clients, wherein the two-way communications link includes a forward channel over which the respective

10   portable client can transmit client data to the server system, and a return channel over which the server system can transmit system data to the respective portable client.

16. The communications system as set forth in Claim 15, wherein the broadcast system is a satellite broadcast system.

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17. The communications system as set forth in Claim 16, wherein each of the portable clients further includes a modem for establishing the two-way communications link.

18. The communications system as set forth in Claim 15, wherein the system data includes

20   instructions for supervising the downloading of software applications.

19. The communications system as set forth in Claim 15, wherein the client data includes requests for unrecoverable software application data, and the system data includes the unrecoverable software application data.

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20. The communications system as set forth in Claim 15, wherein the client data includes client software download request data, and the system data includes download control data issued in response to the client software download request data.

21. A portable data communications device, comprising:

a receiver that includes a tuner that is selectively tunable to receive a selected one of a plurality of software applications broadcasted by a broadcast system;

a user-interface that enables a user to select one of the broadcasted software applications for downloading;

a processor for executing the downloaded software application.

22. The portable data communications device as set forth in Claim 21, further comprising a control program executed by the processor for controlling the tuner.

23. The portable data communications device as set forth in Claim 21, further comprising a modem for establishing a two-way communications link with a network control system, wherein the two-way communications link includes a forward channel over which the portable data communications device can transmit client data to the network control system, and a return channel over which the network control system can transmit system data to the portable data communications device.

24. The portable data communications device as set forth in Claim 21, wherein the broadcast system is a satellite direct broadcast system.

25. The portable data communications device as set forth in Claim 23, wherein the modem is a wireless modem.

26. The portable data communications device as set forth in Claim 25, wherein the broadcast system is a satellite direct broadcast system.

27. The portable data communications device as set forth in Claim 23, wherein the system data includes instructions for supervising the downloading of software applications.

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28. The portable data communications device as set forth in Claim 23, wherein the client data includes requests for unrecoverable software application data, and the system data includes the unrecoverable software application data.

29. The portable data communications device as set forth in Claim 23, wherein the client data includes client software download request data, and the system data includes download control data issued in response to the client software download request data.

30. The portable data communications device as set forth in Claim 21, wherein:

the broadcast system broadcasts the software applications over different channels each occupying a different respective frequency band; and,

the tuner is selectively tunable to any selected one of the plurality of different frequency bands in order to receive the selected one of the software applications broadcasted by the broadcast system.